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News of the Society

Maine Historical Society

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MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume ten, Number three

February 1971

Published quarterly at 485 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04111

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

A significant landmark in the development of the Society was achieved last December when personal memberships reached 1400, a record high. Using the year 1961 as a measure when there were 567 members, the new figure shows that membership has more than doubled in a decade. More interesting than mere numbers is the fact that members are far more widely distributed throughout the State than they were in 1961. In addition to representation from all sixteen counties in Maine, members residing in other States and Canada number 263. The youngest State, Hawaii, is represented, and you will note that in this issue of the *Newsletter* Alaska appears on the list of New Members.

The year 1961 provides an appropriate measure of growth for yet another reason. In June of that year, the first issue of the *Newsletter* was published. The avowed purpose for resuming a regular quarterly publication after a hiatus of some forty years was to keep members better informed about the work of the Society and "at least do something to link the Society more closely with the northern and eastern portions of the State."

During the sixties, other, equally positive efforts were made by the Society to become more responsible to the entire membership. Most significant, perhaps, was the Bylaws revision adopted in September, 1969. This far-reaching document enlarged representation on the Society's governing body, the Standing Committee, introduced a rotating board concept, and provided for proxy ballots enabling the entire membership to vote whether or not they were in attendance at annual meeting. Certainly the most dramatic of these efforts came last November when the Standing Committee voted unanimously to hold the annual meeting of the Society outside the city of Portland for the first time in forty-eight years.

Accepting a gracious invitation from Bates College, the

149th Annual Meeting will convene at Lewiston on Wednesday, June 16, 1971. It will be the first time in the history of this Society that it has met in that city. Dr. Charles E. Clark, associate professor of history at the University of New Hampshire has been invited to speak. A native of Maine, Dr. Clark received his A.B. degree from Bates College in 1951 and his Ph.D. in American Civilization from Brown University. His splendid study, *The Eastern Frontier: the Settlement of Northern New England, 1610-1763* (reviewed in the last issue of the *Newsletter*) was published last year by Alfred Knopf.

Some members have expressed regret that the luncheon has been omitted as a part of the proceedings at annual meeting for the past couple of years. It is a fact that such an occasion is about the only way to provide an opportunity to relax and chat. Accordingly, the Standing Committee voted to include the luncheon once again this year. It will be preceded by the regular business meeting, followed by the guest speaker -- thus breaking the proceedings in an agreeable manner, we trust.

The efforts of the Maine Historical Society to increase its base of support throughout the State and to reach those seriously interested in Maine's history outside the State are not hollow exercises in public relations. From its inception in 1822, the Society's membership, and collections have represented all regions of the State. Those collections which, by recent count, number nearly a million manuscript pieces, 50,000 books and pamphlets, and an untold number of artifacts and paintings, cannot be considered the possession of one particular locality. From Father Rasles' mission bell to Governor King's papers, these rich, diverse collections represent the common heritage of the State of Maine. Between three and four thousand students of Maine history and genealogy use these collections annually, either in person, or by mail. In comparison with similar research institutions, this amount of activity is impressive. Now that new programs in American Studies are being established in many of our colleges and universities, the interest and study of American history at the grass roots level may be expected to increase during the years ahead.

The lovely old Wadsworth-Longfellow House provides the reason for the Society's physical location in Portland, and is maintained by the Society not only for its rich associations with the history of this State, but as a significant trust of national interest and importance. During the four months each year when it is open to the public, it normally receives about 10,000 visitors.

The Society's publications represent the only tangible contact with the Society for many members and most non-members. Here the opportunity to share the results of research and discovery in Maine history finds its most appropriate and durable form. It is also an area in which spiralling costs make it increasingly difficult to find funds for publishing even the most worthy manuscripts.

Herewith a complete listing of all Maine Historical Society publications presently available:

Banks, Ronald F. *Maine becomes a State; the movement to separate Maine from Massachusetts, 1785-1820.*

(Published for the Society by Wesleyan University Press) 1970. 480 pp. Cloth \$15.00

Daggett, Windsor. *A Down-East Yankee from the District of Maine.* (Published by A.J. Huston, Portland) 1920. 80 pp. Paper \$2.00

Goold, Nathan. *The Wadsworth-Longfellow House, its history & its occupants.* (Revised) 1969. 44 pp. Paper \$1.50

Letters of General Peleg Wadsworth to his son John, student at Harvard College, 1796-1798. Biographical chapter and notes by George and Margaret Rose. 1961. 44 pp. Paper \$1.75

Province and Court Records of Maine;

Vol. 3, 1680-1692 (330 pp., 1947) Cloth \$15.00

Vol. 4, 1692-1711 (427 pp., 1958) Cloth \$18.00

Vol. 5, 1711-1718 (250 pp., 1964) Cloth \$18.00

Ray, Roger B. *Indians of Maine; a preliminary inventory of material on the history of the Indians of Maine in the Society Library.* 1969. 11 pp. Paper \$1.50

Spear, Arthur. *Journals of Hezekiah Prince, Jr., 1822-1828.* (Published for the Society by Crown Publishers, Inc.) 1965. 448 pp. Cloth \$12.50

✓ Orders for any of the publications listed above should be placed directly with:

Barre Publishers

South Street

Barre, Massachusetts 01005

NEW MEMBERS

From MAINE Auburn: Charles F. Adams Augusta: Franklin G. Long, Mrs. Franklin G. Long, Lendall M. Thomas, Mrs. Lendall M. Thomas Bailey Island: Miss Marjorie E. Johnson Bangor: Peter C. Haskell, Norman Minsky Bath: Miss Jane W. Stevens Bluehill: Roland M. Howard Bridgton: Miss Alta A. Thompson Brunswick: Donovan D. Lancaster, Philip S. Wilder Cape Elizabeth: Christian E. Born, Mrs. Christian E. Born Castine: Darrell E. Knox Eastport: Miss Mildred Holmes Ellsworth: Butler B. Dunn Gray: Willard S. Caswell, Sr. Hallowell: Mrs. Paul d'Auteuil Lewiston: Randy Erb, Ernest P. Muller Limerick: Miss Linda K. Taylor Lincoln: Mrs. Chester R. Parker Milo: Walter M. Macdougall Minot: Mrs. Aubrey B. Palmer, Jr. Monhegan: Miss Julie Hudson Mount Desert: Miss Virginia Somes Sanderson North Windham: Richard Whitten Orono: Robert M. Gerrity, Miss Elizabeth H. Page Portland: David Astor, R. Ernest Johnston, Miss Mary B. Lippincott, Miss Carol Miller, Spencer Phenix, Leonard A. Taylor, Jr. Rockland: Miss Mary E. Thomas Saco: Philip P. Berry, Mrs. Sarah Bridge Graves Scarborough: Percy J. Wright South Portland: Ethimios G. Bathras Waldoboro: Mrs. Roger E. Miller Waterville: Miss Deborah A. Wentworth West Boothbay Harbor: John M. Dorr Westbrook: Lawrence L. Page Wiscasset: Miss Madeleine Burrage Yarmouth: Mrs. Richard H. Hayden

Other States ALASKA Chugiak: Everett B. Powers CALIFORNIA Fremont: John D. Lowrey CONNECTICUT Norwich: Richard A. Johnson Watertown: Ernest H. Ring, Mrs. Ernest H. Ring MASSACHUSETTS Dedham: Mrs. Robert G. Fuller Hanson: Walter A. Gustafson Northboro: Mrs. Nancy W. Dubay North Randolph: Joseph T. Kelly Swampscott: Richard B. Johnson NEVADA Sparks: Mrs. L. W. Fenstermaker NEW HAMPSHIRE Greenland: Mrs. Ulric Bunker NEW JERSEY Lodi: Mrs. John A. Toner NEW YORK New Hartford: Mrs. Douglas H. Peterson New York City: Joseph Marcus VERMONT Rutland: Jon H. Mayo VIRGINIA Arlington: David R. Anderson

CORPORATE MEMBERS Burnham and Morrill Company; Portland Savings Bank; WCSH-Radio and Television Company.



The Maine Historical Society takes pleasure in announcing its second annual Prize Essay Contest in Maine History.

PURPOSE To encourage the study of Maine History and to promote the publication of serious research efforts in the field.

CRITERIA Originality, accuracy, and scholarship which shows an obvious use of source materials.

ELIGIBILITY Open to members or non-members of the Society. Amateurs having a strong interest in Maine history as well as professional historians and students in higher education are invited to enter. Ineligible are members of the Staff and Standing Committee of the Society.

MANUSCRIPTS Approximately 2,500 words in length, typewritten, double-spaced. Please submit manuscripts to: Director, Maine Historical Society, 485 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04111.

Deadline: May 1, 1971.

AWARDS Announcement of the awards will be made at the Annual Meeting of the Society in June, 1971. *First Prize:* \$100 and publication in the Newsletter. *Two Honorable Mention Awards* will consist of one year's complimentary membership in the Society.

CORRESPONDENCE

Waldoboro, Maine
February 2, 1971

Re: Maine Historical Society Newsletter
Vol. 10 No. 2 November 1970

It is my hope that you will forgive me bothering you with a matter that came to my attention in reading the above Newsletter, but as I read these publications with a great deal of interest and hold them in such esteem, it was my feeling that possibly I might add just a bit to the article relating to the "Maine State Seal".

As you no doubt know, and as indicated in this article, Isaac G. Reed was from Waldoboro and it has generally been considered by the older residents that his daughter was the individual who made the sketch of the Seal included with the report of the Committee named to Report "A Suitable Device and Shield for the State of Maine."

This Committee consisted of 3 members of the Senate, and 5 members of the House of Representatives, whereas under Notes 10. in the Newsletter it refers to the fact that Miss Jessica J. Haskell of Hallowell named 2 from the Senate and 3 from the House. It also refers to an unpublished list of the "joint committee".

I have in my possession, a photostatic copy of the Official Report of this Joint Committee with the signatures of all members and there is no question in my mind, but what the entire report is in the handwriting of Isaac Reed for it matches his handwriting. Also it is interesting to note, that in the drawing of the original SEAL which appears at the top of the report, the star is of 6 points, (not 5) and the figure holding the scythe is resting on the handle, with the blade on the ground (and not resting on the blade of the scythe) which is in contrast with the presently accepted shield. It so happens that John Upton (the Maine Wood Carver) carved a shield which I have, using the description covered in the original report, and it was John Upton who secured the photostatic copy from the original document in the Office of Secretary of State. So there is a paper in existence in the State House relating to this matter.

Sincerely,

Frederick G. Payne

NEWS OF OTHER SOCIETIES
AND INSTITUTIONS

Library of Congress: To commemorate the sesquicentennial of the admission of Maine into the Union, the Library of Congress, on December 21, 1970, opened an important exhibition depicting events in the history and development of the State from the early 17th to the early 20th centuries. Arranged under the direction of Herbert J. Sanborn, Exhibits Officer of the Library of Congress, the exhibition will be on view until September 6, 1971. Approximately 200 pieces are on display, including prints, photographs, manuscripts, rare books, maps, newspapers, and drawings.

In connection with the exhibition, an 86 page, well illustrated catalog was published with an excellent, carefully prepared text by Arthur G. Burton, Assistant Exhibits Officer, and Leonard C. Faber, Historical Exhibits Specialist. The catalog is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, for \$1.00 prepaid. When ordering, it is well to use the complete title: "Maine, the Sesquicentennial of Statehood: an Exhibition in the Library of Congress. Washington, 1970."

Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums: At their annual meeting, the Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums elected the following officers for the ensuing year: Mrs. Peter A. Isaacson, *President*; Harry W. Rowe, *Vice President*; Mrs. Donald D. Kimball, *Secretary*; William S. Greene, Jr., *Treasurer*; and James Silsby, *Assistant Treasurer*. The League now numbers 104 historical societies and museums. It publishes *Maine History News* quarterly and subscriptions are available for \$1.00 a year from: Courier-Gazette, Inc., Rockland, Maine 04841.

The Maine Studies Committee: The Maine Studies Committee will consider for publication by the University of Maine Press manuscripts conforming to the following criteria: (1) The subject should normally be regional, i.e. on Maine, New England, or the wider region which includes adjacent Canadian Provinces. (2) It should conform to the scholarly standards of the field to which it belongs. (3) It should be of substantial length (the Series has occasionally published collections of essays on related themes). (4) Most Maine Studies in recent years have been non-technical and non-scientific. (5) Manuscripts sent to the Committee should be in suitable form for submission to readers.

Examples of recent Maine Studies are: George A. Rawlyck, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (1967) Clarence A. Day, *Ezekiel Holmes: Father of Maine Agriculture* (1968) Richard S. Sprague, *A Handful of Spice: Essays in Maine History and Literature* (1968) George A. Havens, *Frederick J. Waugh, American Marine Painter* (1969) and Edward O. Schriver, *Go Free: the Antislavery Impulse in Maine, 1833-1855* (1970).

The Maine Studies Committee welcomes inquiries about the possible publication of manuscripts. Contact Professor Alice R. Stewart, Chairman, Maine Studies Committee, 140 Stevens Hall, University of Maine at Orono, Orono, Maine 04473.

Federal Records Center, Waltham, Massachusetts: Over 2,000 feet of the early records of the Federal courts for the districts of Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island were recently accessioned by the Regional Archives at Waltham, it was reported in the October, 1970 issue of *The American Archivist*. Included are the records of the United States District Courts for the three districts dating from the establishment of the Federal judicial system under the Judiciary Act of 1789 and through the year 1945. Also included are the records of the old United States Circuit Courts beginning in 1790 for New Hampshire and Rhode Island, and 1820 for the District of Maine. Until 1820, appeals and writs of error from the District Court in Maine were heard by the United States Circuit Court for the District of Massachusetts. Records of the circuit courts terminate in 1912 when these courts were dissolved. Included are "final" records, dockets, minutes, journals, term papers, criminal law, equity and admiralty case files, bankruptcy papers, and many other records. Besides the documentation of the cases, there are also such records as petitions for the relief of persons imprisoned for debt, lists of counsellors and attorneys admitted to practice before the Federal courts, applications for pensions by Revolutionary War veterans, copy-right records, and naturalization papers.

Commencing with this issue, permanent locations of key documents on Maine history will be reported regularly in the Newsletter as they come to our attention. Only manuscripts which are readily available to students of history (as opposed to those in private hands) will be noted.